
Introduced by Senator Cox

January 3, 2007

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 4—Relative to the James E. Roberts Memorial Bridge.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 4, as introduced, Cox. James E. Roberts Memorial Bridge.

This measure would designate the Tuolumne River Bridge on State Highway Route 120 in Tuolumne County as the James E. Roberts Memorial Bridge. The measure would also request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost of appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

Fiscal committee: yes.

1 WHEREAS, James E. “Jim” Roberts is deserving of special
2 public commendation in recognition of his exemplary career with
3 the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as a structural engineer
4 for a half-century; and

5 WHEREAS, Jim Roberts graduated with a bachelor of science
6 degree in civil engineering and began his engineering career with
7 Caltrans in the summer of 1953, but was deployed six weeks later
8 to active duty in Korea as a commissioned second lieutenant in
9 the Army, where he was involved in the rebuilding of damaged
10 bridges after the war ended, and remained in the Army Reserves
11 until he retired as a colonel in 1985 after 33 years of active and
12 reserve duty; and

13 WHEREAS, Jim Roberts returned to Caltrans in the summer of
14 1955 to what was then the Bridge Department, Construction

1 Branch, and began working on the Highway 101 Bypass in Cotati
2 and eventually was moved to work on the “Grapevine” project in
3 Bakersfield, where he began a four-year trek over the hill after
4 work, to the University of Southern California (USC), returning
5 home around midnight, to earn his Master of Science degree in
6 Structural Engineering from USC in 1966; and

7 WHEREAS, Jim Roberts worked his way up through the ranks
8 at Caltrans, until in 1981 he was promoted to Deputy of
9 Engineering, and then became the project director representing
10 Caltrans in working with the City and County of Sacramento and
11 the Sacramento Regional Transit District to build the light rail
12 project; and

13 WHEREAS, Jim Roberts, with the light rail project winding up
14 in 1985, returned to Caltrans as the manager of bridge design, and
15 on July 1, 1987, became the Division Chief of the Division of
16 Structures, equivalent to Assistant State Highway Engineer; and

17 WHEREAS, Jim Roberts then became the Chief Bridge
18 Engineer, and was instrumental in establishing seismic performance
19 criteria following the Loma Prieta Earthquake of 1989; and

20 WHEREAS, Jim Roberts recognized the need for a better
21 training program for young engineers and established the Bridge
22 Design Academy, and was instrumental in creating opportunities
23 for women to promote into higher positions in engineering; and

24 WHEREAS, Jim Roberts was active in over 17 professional
25 organizations, including State President of the Professional
26 Engineers in California Government in 1972; wrote over 50 papers
27 and publications on bridges and other transportation issues; and
28 was the recipient of over 20 professional awards during his career;
29 and

30 WHEREAS, Jim Roberts retired in 2001 from Caltrans, and
31 died on July 6, 2006; and

32 WHEREAS, It is appropriate to recognize Jim Roberts’ many
33 years of service to Caltrans and to the people of California by
34 designating a bridge in his memory; now, therefore, be it

35 *Resolved, by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
36 *thereof concurring, That the Tuolumne River Bridge on State*
37 *Highway Route 120, in Tuolumne County, shall be designated as*
38 *the James E. Roberts Memorial Bridge; and be it further*

39 *Resolved, That Caltrans is requested to determine the cost of*
40 *appropriate signs, consistent with the signing requirements for the*

1 state highway system, showing this special designation, and upon
2 receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover that
3 cost, to erect those signs; and be it further
4 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
5 this resolution to the Director of Transportation and to the author
6 of this resolution for appropriate distribution.

O